

## Message Text

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FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY'S PARTY/TOM RESTON FROM S/PRS--TRATTNER

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:SOPN

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF DEPARTMENT DAILY BRIEFING--JULY 20, 1977

1. ONLY TWO ITEMS OF INTEREST WERE QUESTION OF CUBAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA AND TERRORIST GROUP IN EL SALVADOR.
2. CUBANS IN ANGOLA. FOLLOWING IS VERBATIM EXTRACT FROM BRIEFING TRANSCRIPT: BEGIN QUOTE

YESTERDAY IN THE BRIEFING, I RESPONDED TO A QUESTION OR TWO ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF CUBANS IN ANGOLA; AND THEN LATER IN THE AFTERNOON, BASED ON WHAT I HAVE TO DESCRIBE AS SOME CONFUSING INTERPRETATIONS OF THOSE FIGURES, I TRIED TO REVISE OR TO CLARIFY WHAT I SAID. I WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER ADVISED TO STICK WITH WHAT I SAID IN THE BRIEFING, SINCE THAT IS LARGELY CORRECT. BUT I WOULD LIKE FOR YOU NOW JUST TO PUT IT ON THE RECORD AND CLARIFY WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY--OR PERHAPS ELABORATE A LITTLE BIT, NOT MUCH.  
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THE FIGURES YESTERDAY THAT I GAVE YOU--AND I THINK I SAID 14-TO 19,000--INCLUDE BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY. IN THE PAST WE'VE SAID THAT THERE ARE 10-TO 15,000 CUBAN TROOPS IN ANGOLA, PLUS A NUMBER OF CIVILIAN TECHNICIANS.

NOW, THE CIVILIANS, WE ESTIMATE, MAY NUMBER AS MANY AS

3-TO 4,000--WHICH, ADDED TO THE 10-TO 15,000 RANGE FOR THE MILITARY, WOULD GIVE YOU A TOTAL CUBAN PRESENCE IN THE 13,000 TO 19,000 RANGE.

NOW, LET ME EMPHASIZE THAT THESE ARE ESTIMATES. THEREFORE, THEY ARE VERY SOFT FIGURES. AND THAT IS WHY SOMETIMES THE FIGURES VARY AND SOMETIMES THE INTERPRETATIONS VARY.

BUT I HOPE THAT WILL CLARIFY IT FOR YOU.

IN THE WAKE OF THE INVASION OF THE SHABA PROVINCE OF ZAIRE AND THE DETERIORATING SITUATION IN ANGOLA, THE CUBANS MAY HAVE INCREASED THEIR COMBAT TROOPS THERE SOMEWHAT. BUT WE BELIEVE THAT THE NUMBER OF COMBAT TROOPS STILL REMAINS WITHIN THE RANGE OF 10- TO 15,000--WHICH WE HAVE, FOR SOME TIME, BEEN ESTIMATING FOR YOU--AND I UNDERLINE THAT WORD "ESTIMATING."

AND I WOULD ONLY WANT TO ADD TO THAT THAT THE CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE IS OF CONTINUING CONCERN TO US, AS I THINK I SAID YESTERDAY. WE DON'T BELIEVE IT'S HELPFUL IN RESOLVING AFRICAN PROBLEMS, AND IT IS AN ISSUE THAT WE WOULD WANT TO TAKE UP WITH THE CUBANS IN DISCUSSIONS ON IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THEM.

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Q: JOHN, WHEN DID YOU NOTICE THIS ARRIVAL OF FOUR THOUSAND CIVILIANS AND HOW DID THEN COME TO YOU? DO YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON THIS?

A: I DON'T, LES.

Q: WELL, WHAT LEADS YOU TO BELIEVE? WAS IT ALL AT ONCE, OR WAS IT A GRADUAL FILTERING--OR ARE THEY HAVING LOTS OF BABIES, OR WHAT? HOW DID FOUR THOUSAND CUBAN CIVILIANS SUDDENLY BE NOTICED BY--

A: THE INCREASE IN THE TOTAL--WHICH I HAD NOTED--WHICH MAY HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE TOTAL COMBAT TROOPS, I'M TOLD DATES FROM ABOUT LATE SPRING--

Q: LATE SPRING.

A: --BUT ON THE CIVILIAN COMPONENT, LES, I CAN'T ANSWER YOU. I JUST DON'T KNOW.

Q: JOHN, IT'S BEEN REPORTED THAT A NUMBER OF CUBAN SOLDIERS WERE ENGAGED IN CIVILIAN TASKS, SO HOW CAN YOU

BREAK DOWN CIVILIAN?

A: WELL, AS I SAY, THESE ARE ESTIMATES AND WE CANNOT MAKE A BREAKDOWN SO CLEARLY. THAT'S JUST THE POINT OF THIS WHOLE CONFUSING EPISODE. D QUOTE.

3. TERRORISM IN EL SALVADOR. I READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: BEGIN QUOTE:

WE HAVE BEEN DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT AN ANNOUNCED THREAT BY A RIGHTIST TERRORIST GROUP IN EL SALVADOR TO KILL ANY JESUITS WHO HAVE NOT LEFT THAT COUNTRY BY JULY 20 AND WE WERE, THEREFORE, PLEASED TO LEARN THAT IN REMARKS TO THE PRESS IN SAN SALVADOR YESTERDAY THE PRESIDENT OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EL SALVADOR, CARLOS HUMBERTO ROMERO, STRONGLY CONDEMNED VIOLENCE FROM ANY SOURCE AND EMPHATICALLY DENIED ANY COUNTENANCE BY HIS GOVERNMENT OF THE RIGHT WING GROUP THAT MADE THE THREAT AGAINST THE PRIESTS.

IN A SEPARATE ANNOUNCEMENT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE IN EL SALVADOR STATED THAT PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES WILL ENERGETICALLY REPRESS VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM FROM WHEREVER THEY COME, LEFT OR RIGHT .

THAT IS THE END OF WHAT I WANTED TO SAY ON THE SUBJECT.

IF ANY OF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE SEVERAL EFFORTS THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS MADE IN THIS SITUATION I COULD DETAIL THEM FOR YOU AFTER THE BRIEFING. END QUOTE. VANCE

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